



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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MEMBER

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS  
COMMITTEE

February 24, 2015 \* 6:00pm \* Middletown City Hall

**Testimony in support of HB 5869, *An Act Concerning Municipal Employers, Unemployment Compensation and the Appeals Process.***

Dear Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang and Representative Rutigliano, and other distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of **HB 5869, *An Act Concerning Municipal Employers, Unemployment Compensation and the Appeals Process.*** The purpose of this bill is to ensure that municipal employers are reimbursed for any unemployment benefits paid to an individual if, upon appeal, it is determined that the individual had no claim to such benefits.

Unlike private sector employers, who participate in the Department of Labor Unemployment Benefits Insurance system, municipal employers will "self-fund" these expenses using property tax revenue from town residents and businesses. If a municipal employee is awarded unemployment benefits and, on appeal, is found to not have merited these benefits, there currently exists no mechanism for municipal employers to seek reimbursement of paid benefits in a similar fashion to private sector employers.

As good stewards of our residents' tax dollars, First Selectmen and Mayors need to have the ability to recoup the paid unemployment benefits if they prevail on appeal. Due to the length of time built into the appeals process, including several 21-day filing periods, by the time the appeal is heard and a decision rendered most of the benefits have been paid out, which can amount to a significant amount of taxpayer funds that should be returned to the municipality. To minimize the further cost to the taxpayer, at the time that the favorable appeal is announced, the Referee or Board of Review should issue a judgment in favor of the municipality to facilitate recoupment of funds.

I urge the Labor and Public Employees Committee to support HB 5869 and thank all the members for their attention.

Regards,

Mike France State Representative, 42nd Assembly District  
Ledyard, Preston, Montville